THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (d) A press report in this regard captioned "Milking the Army with sick cattle" appeared in the issue of 'Hindustan Times' dated 27.5.1997.

2. Quartermaster General, Army Headquarters was asked to go into the details of the report, who, after due verification, intimated that animals in Military Farms are regularly screened for Tuberculosis by Army Veterinary officers and those animals, which are diagnosed with the disease, are immediately culled out from the herd.

3. Milk is supplied to troops only after pasteurisation and its quality is continuously monitored.

4. Dry fodder is stored in compact stacks and is properly covered, as is the practice all over the world and the quality is not inferior.

Cess Collection by Port Trusts

745. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether port trusts are retaining pollution cess worth Rs. 20.39 crores out of Rs. 25.53 crores collected; and

(b) the action taken by the Government to effectively monitor the collection and remittance of cess by the port trust?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) All the major ports have collected an amount of Rs. 5.66 crores and remitted an amount of Rs. 5.35 crores after retaining collection charges.

(b) The collection of cess is being monitored by the Government.

Examination Method

746. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the examination method of X and XII classes by the Central Board of Secondary Education is under fire;

(b) if so, whether a number of petitions have been filed in the courts alleging malpractices and mismanagement in setting of Question papers and evaluation of answer sheets; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) The Government have come across views including criticism expressed in various quarters about different aspects of the Examination System of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

(b) and (c) As per information received from the CBSE, one petition has been filed by the Parents Forum for Meaningful Education in the High Court of Delhi this year alleging certain deficiencies in the Question Papers of the Examinations conducted by the Board in 1997 and the marking scheme prepared by the Board for the guidance of the Head Examiners/Examiners. The CBSE has filed a detailed rejoinder on the points/issues raised in the petition. The matter is still sub-judice.

Supply of Defective Tank Ammunition by Ordnance Factories

747. SHRI RAMSAGAR : Will the Minster of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ordnance factories have supplied over 45,000 rounds of defective tank ammunition to the Armoured Corps regiments across the country without waiting for the test reports to first come in;

(b) whether during test firing it was observed that primer caps were blown off and propellant gases leaked through the capholes leading to loss of life and property as the ammunition fired backwards;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to enquire into the matter of supplying defective ammunition to the armoured Corps by the ordnance factories;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken against the guilty officials; and

(e) the number of people died during the test firings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (e) 39,485 rounds of 125 mm tank ammunition on the High Explosive (HE) and High Explosive Anti Tank (HEAT) ammunition were supplied to the Armoured Corps Regiment by Ordnance Factory Chanda in 1990-91 These versions of the ammunition used primer 'Y'. Primer 'Y' was manufactured with technology transfer from abroad. The initial lots of primer 'Y' were manufactured in the presence and under direct supervision of foreign technical experts

and to their satisfaction. The rounds were issued after successful proof testing of both the primer and ammunition rounds in respect of these two versions. Out of these 39,485 rounds supplied, a portion was used. No problems were reported.

A third version of the ammunition known as 125 mm FSAPDS which is a tank armour piercing ammunition was indigenously developed employing the same proof tested primer 'Y'. During the testing of this third version, that is the FSAPDS, an accident took place. Two lives were lost and one tank was damaged.

Investigations revealed that the accident was most probably due to operation called 'beading' not having been carried out during the manufacture of Primer 'Y'. A committee was constituted to further examine all aspects relating to safety from all angles and it recommended that besides beading another operation known as "Three point stabbing" be also performed during manufacture of the primer. The Primer is now being manufactured with these operations and no abnormalities have been reported.

Following the accident, 28,377 unused rounds of the first two versions out of the lot of 39,485 which had been supplied were segregated and taken up for rectification even though in respect of these two versions no problems had been reported.

[Translation]

Capacity of Ports

748. SHRI VINAY KATIYAR :
KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the capacity of each major ports in the country;

(b) the total percentage of their capacity being utilised at present;

(c) whether the Government propose to increase the capacity as well as basic facilities at the ports;

(d) whether the foreign investors are encouraged by the announcement of new port policy; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) The details of capacity available at various Major Ports as on 31.3.1997 and Traffic handied during 1996-97 are given in Statement attached.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir, it is proposed to enhance the Port Capacity during 9th Five Year Plan by around 122 million tonnes. The Foreign investors having necessary clearance from FIPB/Competent. Authority and Registered/ Proposed to register as a company under Indian Companies Act can be considered for Private Sector projects other than pilotage.

Statement

Details of the capacity available at various Major Ports as on 31.3.1997 and the Traffic Handled during 1996-97.

(In Million Tonnes)

Name of the Port	Capacity as on 31.3.1997 (re-assessed)	Traffic handled
Calcutta	7.87	6.02
Haldia	17.70	17.06
Paradip	10.90	11.58
Visakhapatnam	31.95	34.50
Chennai	25.40	31.85
Tuticorin	7.60	9.17
Cochin	13.46	11.63
New Mangalore	16.45	12.45
Mormugao	19.18	17.37
JL Nehru	9.90	8.10
Mumbai	30.80	33.71
Kandla	24.00	33.73
Total :	215.21	227.14